

NSC BRIEFING

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12 August 1954

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

I. Long-standing ferment increased in Morocco past fortnight; almost died down in Tunisia.

A. French made surprise concession Tunisia 31 July.

B. Mendes-France, in trip to Tunis, proffered threefold terms: internal autonomy for Tunisia, military and diplomatic union (revision protectorate treaties), guarantee French interests.

C. New Tunisian cabinet contains 4 prominent moderate nationalists (2 of them to negotiate with French).

D. However, French settlers continue strongly oppose "concessions."

II. Currently, Morocco seeing upsurge violence.

A. "Month of vengeance," commemorating dethronement Sultan last August, has already meant over 70 dead, 250 injured.

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B. Riots concentrated three areas--
religious center; Petitjean--industrial
area, near US Air Force base, Sidi
Slimane; Port Lyautey--site of US
naval air base.

C. Incidents, riots of past week tied
religious holidays--on eve of which,
last year, former Sultan deposed.
Disorders may reach peak 20 August,
calender anniversary of dethronement.

D. Mendes-France stated in National Assembly
(10 August) present main objective
Morocco is restore order, seek
settlement with present Sultan.

1. This sharp contrast to Tunisian
concessions.

III. Short-term Prospects:

A. In absence more substantial French policy
change, agitation and sporadic disorders
likely to continue.

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B. Formerly pro-French Moroccans will become increasingly disillusioned.

1. One group being further alienated by French "do-nothing" policy, particularly in contrast Tunisia.
2. Second group, exemplified by Berber chieftain El Glaoui, equally disillusioned by French failure take stronger repressive stand.

C. Settlers, worried by possibility of French concessions, will increase pressure on Assembly.

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